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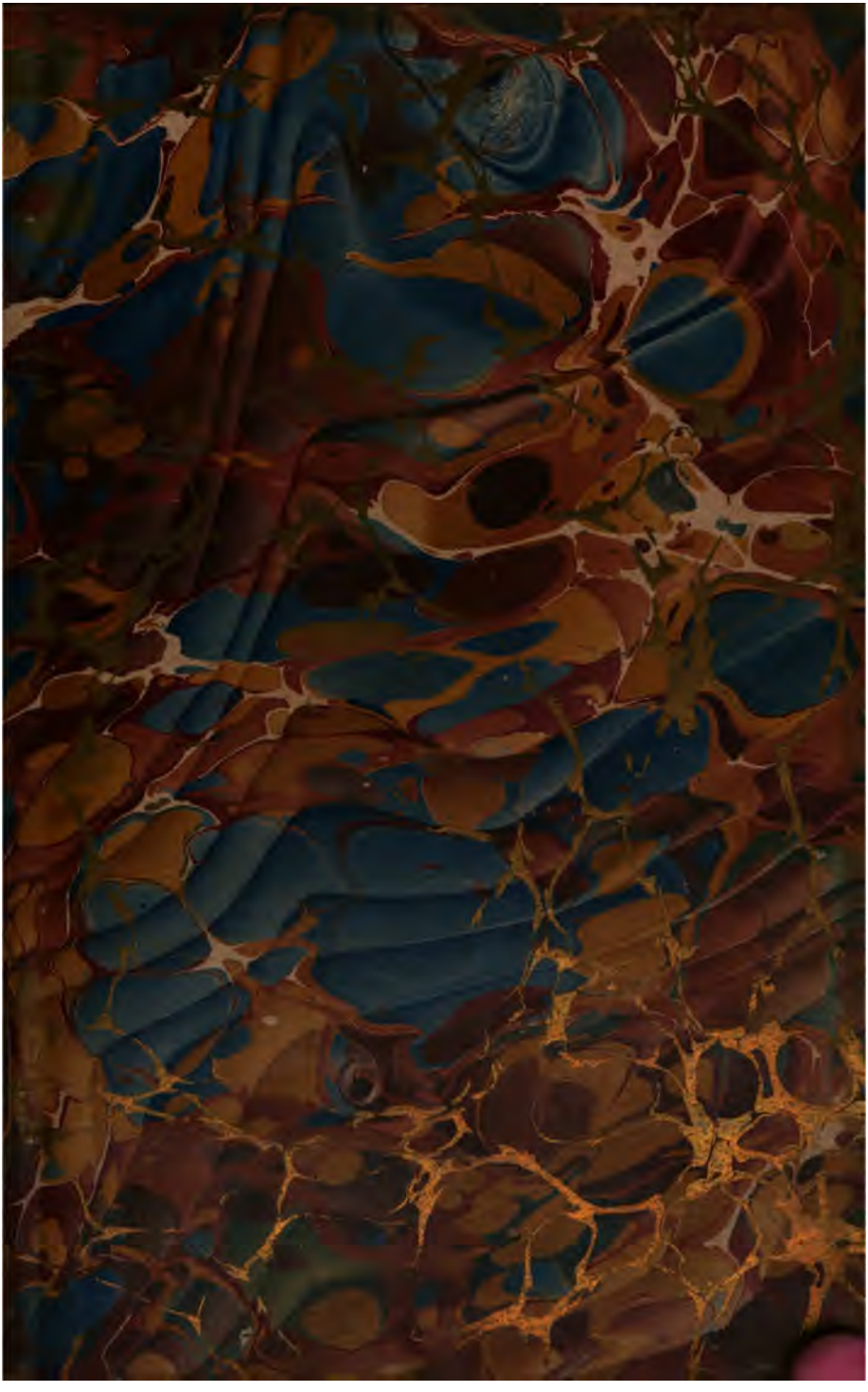

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MARTIN'S VAGARIES;

BEING

A SEQUEL TO "A TALE OF A TUB."

Illustrated by George Cruikshank.

LONDON:

A. H. BAILY & Co., 83, CORNHILL.

1843.

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George Cruikshank

Martin trying on some of Peter's Passions.

Martin's new way of saying grace.

MARTIN'S VAGARIES;

BEING A

SEQUEL TO "A TALE OF A TUB,"

RECENTLY DISCOVERED AT

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.

Diu multumque desideratum.

EDITED, WITH NOTES, BY

SCRIBLERUS OXONIENSIS,

AND ILLUSTRATED BY

GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

LONDON:

A. H. BAILY & Co., 83, CORNHILL.

1843.

J. L. COX & SONS,
PRINTERS TO THE HONOURABLE EAST-INDIA COMPANY,
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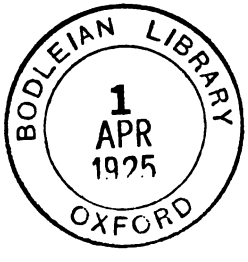

THE PUBLISHER

TO

THE READER.

I AM sorry at being unable to supply my very good friends, the public, with any particular account of the author, or, as he would be thought, the editor, of the following pages. Having searched in vain for the name of Scriblerus in the *Court Guide*, the *London Directory*, and the *Calendars* of the Universities, I am led to imagine this signature to be an innocent imposture, unless, as its outlandish sound affords ground for suspicion, it should prove to be the designation of some distinguished foreigner. I have also, from circumstances which it would be tedious to detail, doubts as to the genuineness of the work itself; indeed, the author appears scarcely to have attempted either the humour or style of the great masterpiece whose title he borrows—both of

which I take to be inimitable; he seems rather to have followed the example of certain popular artists, who, selecting for their model some eminent design, roughly sketch in the principal figures and fit them with the features of public or well-known characters; thus depending for their success, not on any approach to the excellence of the original, but on their felicity in adapting it to the passing events of the day.

This illustration, for which I am indebted to the young gentleman who does my reviews, critiques, &c. for the newspapers, will, I believe, serve to explain the author's main object in writing his book. I may add, that I undertake the publication with no view or expectation whatever of profit—the price being merely nominal—but solely in the hope of forwarding a laudable and philanthropic endeavour to advance the universal improvement of mankind.

SCRIBLERUS LECTORI SALUTEM.

Cum planè necessarium — but, no! every one now-a-days thinks himself qualified to write in Latin, and so admirable is the system of education pursued at our public seminaries, that a modern youth shall be found far better acquainted with the languages of the dead than with those of the living—nay, I am credibly informed by an examining tutor that more than a moiety of the students who (to use a technical expression) are *plucked* at the universities, meet with such a distinction rather in respect of their being unable to spell English than from any deficiency in the translating of Greek. Seeing, then, our own language appears to be the most profound and the least accessible to persons of vulgar attainments, it would appear every way befitting the preface to a work of this learned nature, and as such I shall employ it in the few remarks necessary to be made upon the following chapters.

With respect to the circumstances under which

this treasure, so long lost and now so happily recovered, came into my possession, strange as it may appear, myself, the reader, and the world are indebted for the discovery to a genial compound, commonly known as milk-punch.

It so fell out, that one night, being deeply engaged in the perusal of Carlojacobus's delectable treatise, "De Disciplinâ Ecclesiasticâ," and finding many passages therein more hard than usual to be understood, I had recourse in a proportionate degree to my attendant jorum; this, indeed, I have ever found to be the very best commentary on all writings of an abstruse and dry turn, possessing, as it does, a wonderful knack of smoothing asperities, illuminating obscurities, and reconciling contradictions. By degrees, the difficulties of my author disappeared; propositions which would have startled the most confiding, distinctions which would have puzzled the most profound reader, appeared to me both reasonable and just; and I rapidly became conscious of a force and philosophy in the discourse which others, it is to be feared, have been unable to discover.

Meanwhile, my mental illumination becoming general, it was no longer possible to condense its rays upon the particular object before me—I closed the book—my brain throbbing with intellectual fire spurned the superincumbent jasey and I literally "dashed my wig" into the coal-scuttle. I looked around my room; it was not a large one, being situate

at the top of the belfry tower, and certain irregularities in the roof and ceiling, together with an undue abundance of angles, might perhaps render it unprepossessing to the eye of the stranger. To me it was a palace, an hallowed spot; here had the great Noodlæus, breathed, and read, and slept, and drank milk-punch! As I gazed, an overwhelming impulse, an irresistible desire, of doing something, took possession of me—something strong, but what? Should I break all my windows? alas! they were all broken already: should I knock up the provost? the provost had unfortunately gone down: should I make a bonfire in the "Quad?" it was hardly consistent with the gravity becoming the Otaheitian Professor.

My eye fell full upon a small oaken door in the wall—ha!—the very thing; it led to the lantern, below which hung in solitary majesty the chapel bell. My doubts were resolved on the instant, my purpose fixed; I determined to explore that secret chamber, curtained and carpeted with the cobwebs of centuries. Nailed and bolted as it was, the portal quickly opened at my bidding. Passing some antique porter bottles (they were empty), I ascended the narrow stair; there, in a mass of machinery, 'mid rope and wheel and beam, reposed the bell, the *Deus loci,* like some gaunt skeleton with the moonlight shining through its ribs; but what more particularly attracted my attention was a large cask or tub standing upright in one corner;

the lid was off, and there was sufficient light for me to discern at the bottom, spite of the dust and dirt in which it was enveloped, what appeared to be a bundle of papers. I essayed in vain to reach it, in vain I essayed "to cant the cask," it was firm as a rock; curiosity, however, conquers all things, and as the gravity of the tub was not to be disturbed, I ventured to risk my own. Raising myself by the hoops, I leant cautiously forward, the parcel was still far beyond my grasp; I made another step, stretched forth my arm to its full extent, my finger-tips played with the edges of the paper; another effort, and I plunged head foremost and senseless into the abyss.

On recovering, I found myself in bed, whither my scout, with commendable presence of mind, had conveyed me; strange sensations began to be developed as of tenpenny nails being driven into my skull, while a small lime-kiln appeared to be smouldering in my throat, but my treasure—my papers, they, in all the dignity of dirt, were lying by my side.

Now with reference to the identity of the tub, I shall not venture to give an opinion; it may be, by the hypothesis of one learned antiquarian, the original tub thrown out to the original whale, or according to the suppositon of another sage, equally acute, it may not; but, hitherto, I do verily believe the genuineness of the papers themselves has never been questioned; lest, however, the public should be abused by the insinuations of conceited sceptics, who profess to admit nothing but what they can understand, and whose credulity accordingly is chargeable with no very extended range, it may be well to anticipate all possible objections. The most dangerous sophism likely to be raised, and against which I would more especially guard the reader, is, "that as many of the events recorded or alluded to in this 'Second Part' have taken place subsequently to the death and burial of the author of the First Part, it necessarily follows that the two must have been written at different times and by different hands." But I submit, this, plausible as it appears, is, nevertheless, unsound reasoning, and contains a manifest error or

fallacy, called by logicians *petitio principii;* that is, begging the question. It might with equal propriety be argued, on the other hand, from the very production of this present treatise, that the author is not dead at all, but alive and even merry. The truth, however, is, we are in no way whatever concerned either with the life or death of the author, the sole question being, whether he did or did not write the work attributed to him. Others again will pretend to draw mighty conclusions from the diversity of style in the two compositions, as if the *vinculum orationis* were as indissoluble as the *vinculum matrimonii,* and a man were bound to keep himself unto one style as unto one wife, so long as he should live.

That a very considerable difference exists, I do readily admit, which may be referred to various causes, and more especially to the great changes effected in the humour of the times, which have of late become so refined and nice in their taste, that in a modern writer you shall as soon discover wit as indelicacy. I must admit, too, that, in compliance with this improved temper, I have in some measure acted as censor (or, as my friend, the Bursar, will have it, *non-censor*) to the piece—paring off the excrescences, as it were, of the author's genius, and rendering his performance thereby more decent, though perhaps more dull. It must also be observed, that, as in the first part, he gives a very loosened rein to fancy, so, in the second, he is

bound to adhere more closely to facts, and follow out details more minutely—the history becoming, like all other histories, less lively and imaginative in proportion as it becomes less remote.

These considerations would unquestionably serve to explain the difference in the two styles, were it five times as apparent as it is. In reply to any other cavilling to which the disingenuous may have recourse, I have exactly two dozen good sound strongly-recommended arguments to offer—the first of which is, that no man, save he who commenced this work, either could, would, or should venture to complete it; and this being, I flatter myself, quite conclusive, the reader shall be spared the remaining twenty-three.

Lastly, I fully agree, as in duty bound, with those mighty critics and incorruptible reviewers, who condemn in the great all continuations whatever, whether they appear under the titles of "More Last Words," "Sequels to Endless Entertainments," &c., or in the guise of heroes "Married," "Abroad," "in America," or "in the Moon;" and this, whether they be indited by the first hand, or pirated by another; I further admit that, in the latter case, the great love and admiration for the author, under cover of which such continuations are commonly put forth, is little better than the great love and admiration which pickpockets entertain for the silk handkerchiefs of her majesty's liege subjects; but, *pace tantorum virorum*, I would contend that the

present work does not come within the range of their just censure, being no other than part and parcel of an original design, which having been mislaid, for many years, among other papers, as the author himself lets us know, has since been mirifically brought to light and made public by your humble servant—an invaluable boon to the learned world in general, and more particularly to that part of it contained within the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

Of myself I need say nothing, but shall, without further delay, submit the following pages to the judgment of the impartial reader, bidding him, in the words of the modest translator of *Burgursdicius*— "Read it with diligence and candour, and whatsoever he findeth in it, either profitable or delightful — to the author be the glory — him the advantage—"

VALE.

—— *Coll. Oxon, Kal. Jul.* 1843.

SEQUEL

TO

A TALE OF A TUB.

SECTION XII.

HAVING then, to the vast edification of the reader, and what is of far greater importance, to my own entire satisfaction, disposed of Jack and his vagaries for the present,* we must return to Martin,† whom we have somewhat unfairly left out of sight for a considerable time; and I do this the more readily, inasmuch as, to confess the truth, Martin has always been my favourite of the three brothers. From the first moment of the memorable rupture with Peter to the present day, he has (except in a few cases of extreme provocation) maintained a sober, dignified demeanour, equally removed from the superciliousness of one brother and the violence of the other. His enemies indeed have urged, that,

* *Vide* "A Tale of a Tub," sec. xi.

† By Martin, it will be remembered, is to be understood the English Protestant Church; by Peter, the Church of Rome; by Jack, Dissenters of every denomination; and by their coats, their religion.—*Scrib.*

having suffered considerably from the *heat* of my Lord Peter's animosity, he was used at one time to exhibit an unbecoming degree of *warmth* in return; and it must be admitted, that, under the influence of a temporary taste for curries, broiled bones, devilled kidneys, and other peppery and atrabilious condiments, he did carry the *lex talionis* to very great lengths. He is even reported occasionally to have forgot the respect due to the fair sex, and to have behaved in a manner extremely ungallant towards certain elderly and decrepit gentlewomen;* though, in respect of these latter, seeing they were not only old but unpardonably ill-favoured, few people were at the pains to offer any remonstrances; and perhaps, after all, he did but act according to the spirit of those days wherein an inordinate appetite of life was justly esteemed a mark of underbreeding, and ugliness voted positively penal. The worst part of the business was, that, in the course of all this clawing and squabbling, his coat got an awkward rent, and neither time nor tailors have been able to conceal the blemish.

Brought to his senses by so serious a mishap, Martin abruptly concluded the crusade, abandoned hot luncheons, took to a more wholesome diet, and permitted people to live as long and look as disagreeable as they pleased. Peter and Jack, too, also came in for their shares of his good offices, and to do them justice, they began gradually to moderate

* The Witches.

their angry transports, and to shew something approaching civility to their brother, especially at such seasons when there was any thing to be got. In behalf of the former, he procured a reversal of the warrant out against him, and a renewal of his protection; and, further, was at the cost of building for his convenience a pleasant little *Studio** at the western part of the kingdom, furnishing the same with a yearly allowance of pens, ink, books, paper, and sealing-wax—all of which were received with proportionate gratitude, and an immediate demand for tapers, canes, and penknives. As for Jack, reading, writing, and arithmetic were quite below the notions he had formed of true gentility; his great delight was to run howling and tearing through the country, picking up a subsistence as he could among the poorer sort of people, whom, partly by threats, partly by promises, he cajoled out of their peace as well as their pence. And this, through the over-indulgence of Martin, he was permitted to do to his heart's content, without let or hindrance from any mayor, sheriff, constable, bailiff, or bull-dog whatsoever.

But here the ingenious reader, big with a very pertinent question, is ready to come forward and demand—"How comes it, Sir, that we find Master Martin in a position to erect buildings, bestow settlements, and procure licenses, when the inheritance of the brothers amounted to little more than a good coat apiece, and their time, as far as we have seen,

* The College of Maynooth.

has been employed in spending rather than in acquiring wealth?" To which, with submission, I reply, that as the preface to a book is always written the last, so is it the constant practice with your true modern authors to commence with a mystery—no matter whether it relates to a murder, an orphan, or a darkly-complexioned stranger, but he must plunge at once *in medias res*—employing no small part of the succeeding chapters in narrating what is supposed to have occurred previous to the events detailed in the first. In proof, however, that I am not disposed to overstrain this privilege, I would have you to know at once, that the father of these three worthies numbered many and great friends, who, out of respect to him, did place by will and deed-of-gift sundry lands and tenements in the hands of trustees for the benefit of the aforesaid young gentlemen. Now, so long as the three continued together in amity and under one roof, no one dreamt of interfering with the management of their estate; but when the extravagancies of my Lord Peter had caused the rupture between them, the trustees* thought it an admirable opportunity to resume so much of the property as they could manage to lay hands on; and having set aside a few acres for their own private pleasure-grounds, and devoted a few rents to their own eating and drinking and other unavoidable expenses, they very conscientiously bestowed the remainder upon Martin, under certain conditions;

* The State.

viz., that he should promise and vow to obey the commands expressed in his father's will—to add nothing thereto—to detract nothing therefrom—but to carry out all the provisions thereof, both in spirit and according to the letter.

To all this Martin willingly gave consent, and in testimony of his sincerity, he had recourse, without delay, to certain able lawyers and upright men, who drew out for him an excellent abstract of the will in question; appending thereto, by way of protest or apology, some very severe comments upon my Lord Peter's assumption. To this document,* comprising nigh forty sentences, easy to be understood and remembered, Martin did most solemnly subscribe his name and affix his seal. With respect to the disinheritance of Jack * * * * obstinacy * * * * vagabond mode of living * * * *de lunatico inquirendo* * * *Hiatus in MS., valdè deflendus* * * and this is the clearest account I can give of the matter.

For about three years, then, although moved occasionally by the freaks of Jack in the North, and the more serious commotions fermented and stirred up by Peter in the West, Martin, who was settled in his new estate, led a tolerably easy and contented life; indeed, as an impartial historian, I do freely confess that, latterly, he began to take matters rather too easily. He shut up his books, bought a

* The Thirty-nine Articles.

horse, with several pairs of top-boots, and spent his time for the most part in hunting, shooting, fishing, and the like, to the great injury no less of his farms than of his personal appearance, in both of which particulars he became negligent in the extreme. His flowing periwig he had long since docked to a bob of a decent and grave cut; this was now discarded entirely, and he would be seen on Sundays and holidays in what the boys of the parish were pleased to denominate *a shocking bad hat.*

It was scarcely to be expected or desired that such conduct should be allowed to pass long without reproof; and it was still less probable that when reproof was called for, Jack should be found unwilling or niggardly in bestowing it. Martin, therefore (or, as he might at this period be styled, Squire Martin), found himself very suddenly become an object of general dislike. He was writ against, talked against, and preached against; and was made, in short, the butt for all the scurrilous jests, biting sarcasms, and sly innuendoes of Jack and his companions. For some time he despised the outcry, and would mount his horse, and crack his bottle, and laugh at all gainsayers as before. At length, however, conscience perhaps making some little stir within, he was induced to listen to what was urged so clamorously without, and began each day to smart and wince more and more under the irony of his tormenters. Now, when once satire gives pain, it plainly shews that amendment is not only needed, but practicable

also; and herein it resembles those patent medicines which act only upon systems that are at once diseased and capable of relief; the man who is in full health, or utterly incurable, experiences no inconvenience from the dose.

Meanwhile, what was our hero to do at so important a juncture? Hunting, and shooting, and fishing, were all mighty pretty pastimes, but a reformation was urgently demanded. In this dilemma, he bethought him of again referring to his father's will, but not one word could he find there of horses, or dogs, or double-barrelled guns. In his determination, he manifestly hit upon the wisest course, and resolved, without more ado, to quit all such extravagancies, to brush up his coat anew, and look after his farms. Now, it so happened, that there had lately been allotted to the latter certain large uncultivated tracts of land, which lay at a considerable distance from the homestead, and he thought he could choose no better way of shewing his newly-revived zeal and attention to business than by sending out companies of labourers and foremen,*who might fence and drain, plough, harrow, and manure all these outlying bits.

It is difficult to determine with exactness the degree of profit resulting from these speculations. The workmen, whose equipment, by the way, cost Martin a pretty penny, spoke confidently of their "successes under the blessings of Providence," and most heartily congratulated their master on the

* Missionaries to the Colonies, &c.—*Scrib.*

promising state of the sown lands, and the healthy condition of the crops; there were, nevertheless, not wanting ill-natured persons who affirmed that many of these worthy individuals spent rather too much time in making and compounding egg-flip with the cottagers' wives; hinting, furthermore, that the increase of produce was confined mainly to the live stock. Be that as it may, Martin honestly believed that he was doing a great deal of good, and no doubt he was in the right.

Indeed, it would have been well had he confined himself to the improvement and cultivation of his estate; but when once the spirit of reform takes possession of an individual, it is no easy matter to find a safety-valve at the proper moment; and for one step of sound policy it induces him to take, it hurries him into three that had better been avoided; and so it fell out with Martin, for, as ill luck would have it, he came plump one day upon a large pier-glass, which a principal person in the parish had lately procured as an ornament to his drawing-room. "What!" says he, mightily astonished at his figure, "is it possible!—can this be I? What a hat!—what linen!—what boots!—and stockings that even my brother Jack would be ashamed of —did he condescend to wear any."

The next morning, our hero made his appearance in a bran new beaver, with a rose stuck jauntily in the band, a cravat of spotless white, and hose and shoes of the most courtly fashion. "Why, hilloa!"

exclaims an acquaintance, "where didst thou get such a fine hat, friend Martin?" "*Master* Martin, if you please," says he, gently interrupting him. "*Master be* ——," quoth the other, and went his way whistling. But the fit was on, and Martin was not to be put down by a whistle. "He pretends to dislike my hat," says he, "does he! a low vulgar rascal. We will see what he is pleased to say to my smallclothes.' 'Accordingly, on the following Sunday, Mr. Martin's inexpressibles formed the topic of conversation in all the polite circles in the parish. "This," quoth he, with much complacency, "will do; and, unless I am mistaken, my old flame, Madame De Grands Titres,* bestowed encouraging glances upon the improvement of my figure; and, after all, 'tis but a duty we owe to society and ourselves, to fall in as near as may be with the prevailing mode."

* *Vide* "A Tale of a Tub," sec. ii.

SECTION XIII.

Now the considerate reader will be pleased to remark, that hitherto I have treated of the adventures of my hero in a sufficiently brief and succinct manner, giving but an epitome, a trebly-distilled essence, as it were, of his career; his fortunes, however, from this point assume a more interesting and important face, and demand, by consequence, a more particular report. Wherefore I would have it noted, that the action which furnishes matter for the remainder of this delectable treatise occupies a very contemptible space of time in comparison with that already passed over, being restricted, for the most part, to the events of the last nine or ten weeks.

It followed very close upon the affair of the pier-glass just related, that Martin's friends and acquaintances began to view with concern something extremely odd and eccentric in his general demeanour; *semel insanivimus omnes*—and very fortunate or very foolish must that man be who is visited but with one fit—but we have treated elsewhere of the philosophy of madness; — though, indeed, many of those quick-witted persons who will see much further into a millstone than Dolland, with all his

pebbles and lenses, and perspective-glasses, would pretend to do, have not hesitated to assert that Martin's was by no means a case in point; but that, having observed the tender care and consideration ever bestowed by the state upon lunatics, and especially those of the more mischievous sort, he did but assume insanity as a blind and cover for his desperate designs, which they further pretended to be no other than the entire subversion of the established church and the assumption of regal authority. Being unwilling myself, in a matter of such moment, to give a decision, *ex cathedrâ*, I shall simply place the facts in the hands of the judicious reader, taking care that they be impartially and exactly stated, and permit him to come to such conclusions as his own great wisdom may suggest.

And here it is fit, in the first place, that I should speak of a certain new sect which, under the names of Novelists or Tabbies,* sprung up about this time, and whose system exercised considerable influence upon the proceedings of our hero. As the Œolists, or windy philosophers, it will be remembered, owed their existence to Jack, so did the Novelists, or wet philosophers, derive their origin from Martin. The former, as has been shewn, referred all things to their first principle, wind; and, in like manner, the latter maintained that all things were to be preserved, amended, or obliterated by their *primum mobile*—water, or, to speak more accurately, ιχωρ, or

* N—nites, or P—yites.

as some have it, ιvχωρ. In this fluid they contend, which, under various forms and in various combinations, pervades the whole extent of the universe, consist the true principles of life and immortality; that to this alone the philosopher owes his learning, the poet his imagination, the statesman his statistics, and the man of fashion his long bills; that, deprived of it, we should have neither divines nor lawyers, physicians nor historians; that man himself would become little better than a locomotive cauliflower; that the accounts of creation would be for ever confused, and all nature plunged into everlasting bankruptcy.

Among other tenets, which are too numerous to particularize and too philosophical to be understood, they held that this fluid, which, in hot fiery temperaments and adust brains, the case of the Œolists to wit, is dissipated in noise and smoke, becomes condensed in men of cooler headpieces, as in the top of an alembic, and having sufficiently traversed the system, is thrown off by a visible perspiration at the fingertips; and accordingly, the more learned professors among the Novelists might be often seen with damp towels bound across their brows, for the purpose of chilling *in transitu* any more volatile particle which might otherwise have made its escape in vapour. On their heads, moreover, they commonly wore a cap or covering of very peculiar make, which if not serviceable for this end, was certainly adapted to no other.

Now it followed, as a consequence of these dogmas, that he should be held in greatest esteem among the members of the sect who could produce and employ the largest proportion of this divine ινχωρ· accordingly, there was no small emulation among the doctors as to who should furnish to the world the greatest number of sheets of paper impressed with this token of superiority.

Does a shoe press disagreeably upon any particular corn, out pops a pamphlet announcing the interesting circumstance to society. Does the dinner of the preceding day lie undigested upon the stomach, Letter 81 startles their disciples with the intelligence. Are they pinched and confined in their lower garments, straightway the tailor is held up to public indignation in "Thoughts on S—pt—n." Do their minds become unsettled or their bodies bilious—the very streets are flooded with torrents of Remains, Reviews, Discourses, and Addresses to my Lords the Bishops. In a word, according to them, this fluid is the universal solvent; the philosopher's stone, the *elixir vitæ*, the *arcanum magnum*, the το αριστον, containing within itself the mighty secrets of the longitude and the quadrature of the circle; all things, they maintain, spring from and are reducible to ινχωρ, and as, without doubt, the world has in the first instance been written up, so in due course of time it will as certainly be written down.

The promulgation of these doctrines produced very

naturally a considerable stir in the learned world. "*Heretici*," cries one; "Doctores damnabiles," exclaims another; "monachi, papistæ, humbuggi!" and their opponents, with all the eagerness of a young sportsman who has sprung his first covey of partridges, rattled off their double-barrelled treatises without any very exact aim, or so much as considering whether or no the game were within the range of their pieces. The more crafty sort marked them down and reserved their fire. Of the parties who thus took up arms against the Tabbies or Novelists, the chief were the *Anithingarians*, whose doctrines were rather vague and unsettled, and the *Quitotheronians*, an *hyper-Œolistic* sect; of these the former proved the more numerous, the latter the more violent.

For some time Martin kept himself aloof, and hesitated as to which side he should take in the forthcoming controversy; by degrees, however, it was observed, that he leant considerably to the opinions entertained by the new party, more especially as many of their tenets seemed to coincide exactly with his own views. On the other hand, they, for their parts, being most anxious for the conversion of a person of so much weight, proceeded very speedily to fall in with his humour. They would write to him mighty long letters crying up his dignity, in which they would have him believe he had no equal in the country; nay, that he was "*not even merely co-ordinate and fellow* with the other great folks, *but infi-*

nitely superior, and paramount, of Divine right." * " But prythee, beloved Martin," asks one, " how can you reasonably hope to be received with the respect and awe due to a person of your condition, when you continue to make so contemptible a figure in society?" "Do you persuade yourself into the belief that your upper habiliment is a coat?—a coat indeed it is with a vengeance, but one which no gentleman of quality could commit himself by bowing to. Better follow my Lord Peter's cut, with all his fopperies and extravagancies, than be seen in an unhandsome, paltry garment, from which every thing that renders a coat becoming and respectable has been stripped."

Martin was considerably taken aback by this severe reflection upon his costume—he turned first to the cuffs, next to the lappels, and lastly to the skirts of the article in question, but without finding much relief for his embarrassment in the survey. " Assuredly," quoth he to himself, "'tis of a very excellent fabric, and of superior workmanship, but I must allow it to be plaguily plain; a little—the least in the world—of binding would certainly improve its appearance—it would do more, it would help to preserve it, and keep the edges from fraying; nay, 'tis absolutely necessary." Indeed, to say the truth, for some time past Martin had begun to feel somewhat ashamed of the exceeding simplicity of his coat—he could not avoid calling to mind the shoulder-knots, and the gold lace, and the silver

* British Critic, vol. xxv.

tags wherein he formerly had so much delighted, and he felt a sort of longing for a return to those discarded pomps and vanities. A binding was laid on accordingly, but in colour and substance so closely resembling the main cloth itself, as at a little distance to be wholly unperceived.

Mightily pleased with the success of their first essay, the Novelists proposed next that the whole coat should be lined, as it formerly had been, with flame-coloured satin; and for this purpose they procured a rich assortment of various shades and patterns, but all bearing more or less a resemblance to the original device of Peter, from which to select one in accordance with modern taste.* "Why, really, gentlemen," cries Martin in dismay, "surely this is utterly at variance with the whole tenor of my father's will, and affords one of the chief reasons for my breaking with my brother the Emperor; being furthermore expressly provided against in the declaration lately set forth under my hand and seal." In reply to these objections came a long letter from one of the most learned professors, who happened at that time very fortunately to be provided with an unusual supply of mirific ινχωρ at his fingers' ends. "Permit me," wrote he, "Mr. Martin, to observe that your late speech, brief as it is, contains three very palpable errors. In the first place, the propriety of pink satin, though not expressly

* Vide Tract XC. on the docrine of Purgatory, "Pusey's Reply to the Pastoral Letter," &c.—*Scrib.*

stated in the will, may directly be inferred therefrom; and if there should be a question in the matter, it is by all means advisable to give the lining the benefit of the doubt. Secondly, I would have you to know, that you have in no way broken with my Lord Peter, '*and put him to the ban; for aught you have done, you might communicate with him now;*'* and lastly, as regards the declaration drawn up by your *un-Catholic* friends, I will undertake to shew, first, that they say nothing whatever about the matter; secondly, that we are not bound to understand them as saying that it is objectionable; thirdly, that in so saying, they do not say what they mean; and, fourthly, that what they say is entirely without foundation in fact:—upon any of which pleas I shall be most happy to join issue."

* * * * *

Here in the original manuscript follows a long and profound digression on the true use and abuse of language, which, by agreement with my bookseller, is reserved for the hundredth edition of this work. The author commences by falling foul of the vulgar definition, namely, that "*language is the expression of our ideas and their various relations by certain articulated sounds which are used as the sign of those ideas and relations.*" This he very justly concludes to be a very palpable fallacy, inasmuch as language is conversant rather with the concealment than the revealing of our ideas—it is

* British Critic, July, 1836.

a weapon offensive and defensive, wherewith we may feint, lounge, and parry, as circumstances require, and its proper end and object is rather to suggest ideas in others, than to expose our own; wherefore he goes on to shew—that must be the perfection of language which calls up the greatest number of ideas in the fewest possible words, and by consequence, that, the most complete sentence which may be construed in the greatest number of ways: of this fact, he observes, the ancients appear to have been aware; and hence we find the celebrated speech—

"*Aio te Æacida Romanos vincere posse;*"

which, after all, conveyed but a twofold meaning, was deemed by them of such excellence as to be put into the mouth of their profoundest deity. He goes on to establish the great superiority of the moderns in this art, and quotes largely from the Novelists in support of his assertion. Like skilful generals, says he, they are cautious not to take up their ground without having secured means of retreat, and, regarded in its proper light, their mode of handling subtile and dangerous questions appears the most complete imaginable, each proposition being delivered in terms so perfect as to bear an endless variety of interpretations. No sooner is the heavy artillery of the foe brought to bear upon one point, than *hey, presto,* they are gone, and have taken up their position in another; this, in like manner, is abandoned; a third resorted to for defence, and so

on, bo-peep backwards and forwards, *ad infinitum*, to the great perplexity of the enemy and proportionate diversion to the spectators. But, as I have said, for many reasons with which I do not trouble the reader, the essay will not be printed here, but will be given entire, and without additional charge, to all purchasers of the hundredth edition of this most mirific treatise.

SECTION XIV.

We left Martin as yet *in statu transitûs*, resembling that of the grub in his passage to the crysalis; we find him now much improved by the advice and companionship of his new friends, and marvellously affecting the fine gentleman. But the most remarkable change was that of his sentiments and conduct towards my Lord Peter, of whom he now began to speak with great tenderness—he would follow him in the streets, run against him at unexpected turns, and would smile and bow obsequiously whenever he found opportunity of exchanging common courtesies with him. Peter, for his part, did not appear to be at much pains either to fall in with or to avoid his brother, but met his advances with a distant patronizing air, which, by experience, he found far more profitable than his former violent conduct; but upon the least hint being dropped relative to their taking a chop and a pint of wine together, he would button up his pockets very tightly, assume a severe aspect, and reply, that no man should ever put feet under his mahogany who did not know good mutton*

* This alludes to Peter's "palming his crusts upon them as good mutton," by which is intended the doctrine of Transubstantiation. —*Scrib.*

when he saw it; and to say the truth, Martin had so puzzled his brain of late with matters hard to be understood, and matters not to be understood at all, as to entertain doubts that my Lord Peter might possibly be right, *in a certain sense*, in his view of that abstruse subject; not, however, being prepared, *as yet*, to abandon *in toto* his declaration upon this point, he would commence coughing and hemming, and endeavour to turn the conversation into another channel; but again he met with a repulse, my Lord Peter would hold no intercourse with any one who in any way, or in any degree, should lend countenance and support to so impudent a rascal as Master Jack; and he further threw out an intimation in pretty plain terms, that the first step towards reconcilement must be a distinct protest against the claim of the latter to be considered a brother, or indeed any relation whatever to the family.

No sooner did our gentleman begin to understand what Peter would be at, than he determined to remove, without more ado, that bar to their friendly intercourse; he took accordingly the finest sheet of post in his portfolio, selected the finest-nibbed pen, and readily transcribing the following affectionate epistle to his brother Jack, despatched it by an especial messenger.

"DEARLY BELOVED JOHN,

"Having long witnessed, to my great pain and concern, your strange antics, your bedaubed

and draggled apparel, and your truly destitute condition, I do hereby give you to understand, that, out of my great regard and brotherly love, I purpose to conclude abruptly all intercourse with you whatsoever; and I trust, my dear John, you will do me the favour to believe that, in so doing, I am actuated purely by a desire to advance your interest and happiness. The world may not understand this; it will probably assign to me motives of a very different description, but you and I, John, have long learned to place the opinion of the *mobile* at a just estimate; you, I feel assured, will at once appreciate the kindness and true Christian temper which induce me, seeing you in want and extreme danger, to put my hands in my breeches pockets, and turn civilly aside; you will not doubt—and if you do, I shall not be greatly disturbed thereat—my sympathy with your deplorable lot; nor will you wonder that I should esteem it impertinent to meddle with arrangements which Providence has so manifestly disposed in your behalf; you will be pleased, therefore, to consider that we are henceforth to be regarded as entire strangers to each other—that all ties of blood are hereby dissolved, all claims of connection cancelled. Nay, further, my dear John, that you will, for the future, be '*avoided by me as an object of abhorrence*"*—and all this, as I said before, out of the truest charity and concern for your welfare, coupled with a sincere hope, that when

* Vide Parochial Sermons, vol. iii. p. 220.

Mr. Nicholas, your adopted father, *does* think fit to commence the operation of broiling, you may not find the experiment quite so unpleasant as we have had reason to suspect. Meanwhile, believe me,

"My dear Jack,

"Your very best friend,

"*Oxford.* "MARTIN."

Highly satisfactory as this mark of attention doubtless was to my Lord Peter, nevertheless it did not draw from him the expected invitation to dinner, and Martin, or as he now sought to be styled, Mr. Peter, Jun., was forced to resort to other shifts and devices.

And here it may be well to lend a helping hand to the ardent and anticipating reader, and assist him out of an error into which I do humbly conceive that he has fallen: for, with all our care and circumspection, it is not possible for us writers to make our path so broad, and plain, and straight, but that the reader, impatient, and all for short cuts, will occasionally deviate from the track, and plunge head-over-ears into some deceitful swamp.

It is not, then, to be understood that Martin openly professed any particular regard for Peter, or avowed any desire to conform himself to his brother's strange customs, or admitted to his most intimate friends a hope or expectation of a dinner-card: on the contrary, both he and the Novelists were loud in repudiating all such designs. Nay,

they declared, in the strongest terms possible, that were such an invitation to arrive, it would be declined decidedly, and by return of post. Nor will this conduct appear to a reflecting mind in any way inconsistent with the end it is supposed they had in view, but only analogous to that of the Irish gentleman, who, having caught one poaching on his preserves, inquired of the butler, "Do ye happen to have such a thing as a pump in the yard?" and added, on being answered in the affirmative, "then be sure, Sir, you *don't* duck him."

But whatever his designs might be, his actions took every day a stranger colour. In particular, having brought home with him two new hats in a large box, he would lock himself up in his study for days together, and Betty, who, in the exercise of her calling, had frequent occasion to apply her eye to the keyhole, avowed, on the faith of a bedmaker, that she had often seen him with both on his head at once, after the manner of my Lord Peter, and practising all kinds of airs and graces in front of the looking-glass. Then, on high days and holidays, he would parade the streets on a pair of stilts, to the no small gratification of the juvenile portion of her majesty's liege subjects, many of whom, in testimony of their esteem, were pleased to salute him with a very liberal allowance of mud and brickbats. So eccentric, indeed, had he become, that the Novelists, who had just hit upon a profound notion, thought him fit for their purpose, and came accord-

ingly with a modest proposal that he should put away his wife, as he had been once induced to do by Peter, and for the future devote himself to a life of celibacy. This, they maintained, was the state originally intended for him by his maker. The noblest animals of creation:—the whale, monarch of the waters; the lion, mightiest among beasts; the eagle, sovereign of the sky, were all, in their separate domains, solitary and supreme. Man, and man alone, consents to become half an individual. Was it not, moreover, painful and humiliating to witness time wasted away in the indulgence of so unnatural and unnecessary a feeling as connubial affection, which might be employed in the solving a problem or writing a pamphlet?

Now, inasmuch as these philosophers themselves, for the most part, led a solitary and sedentary life, and were, by consequence, the best possible judges of the wants of society, and of the advantages of the marriage state, it would have been but reasonable, had Martin complied with their request, or, at all events, taken the matter into serious consideration; but instead of doing this, he flew at once into a most unphilosophical rage, and without so much as giving his friends a patient hearing, declined their advice. "What!" quoth he, "turn my back upon the ladies! abandon the chaste embraces of Mrs. Martin!—impossible! Who, under Providence, is to smooth my band and darn my stockings? Who is to mark my linen and provide for

my dinners? What is to become of my poor pensioners? Who is to distribute my alms to them, making up in kindness and counsel what may be lacking in amount? Who is to watch by the bed of the sick and the infirm, ministering those numberless, nameless charities which a woman's heart alone can suggest, and a woman's hand alone can supply? I am not a whale, nor a lion, nor an eagle! No, gentlemen! I think the binding necessary, the flame-coloured satin admissible, and would not stand out for a yard or two of gold lace; I place my nether garments entirely at your disposal, but, with submission, I can see no good reason for giving up my wife!"

Seeing Martin in this extremely dull and obstinate mood, the Novelists merely withdrew their proposition for the present, determining to lay it by for some more favourable juncture. Meanwhile, they contented themselves with pressing upon his attention an entirely original and improved system of household economy.

In the first place, they suggested that his dining-table, which, heretofore, was of plain deal, should be replaced with one of mahogany, or, at least, be covered with a veneer of that wood, and that henceforth it should not be called a table, but should receive some more appropriate and imposing title. Secondly, they enjoined him to discard entirely his waistcoat of black silk,* and be seen for the

* The preacher's gown.—*Scrib.*

future in nothing but plain white. Thirdly, they recommended that he should purchase a pair of mosaic gold candelabra,* to be lighted up at the dinner-hour; and, lastly, they protested strongly against his custom of looking full at his guests while in the act of saying grace, but advised him, turning his back upon the company, to mutter it to himself, with his head out of the parlour window, which they maintained to be the orthodox mode, and the only way of securing a good digestion to his friends, and of justly consulting his own ease and dignity.

To all this, out of that violent love of novelty which the three brothers had ever entertained, in spite of the plain warnings of their father upon this point, Martin very readily agreed. Unfortunately, however, there was another party to be consulted, and his guests pretty plainly hinted that if his house was to be filled with such vain forms and ceremonies, he might fill it himself for them. "What additional zest," asked they, "will mahogany give to the viands? or what increase of appetite will a new name produce? Why, again, should our attention be distracted, and our eyes dazzled, by great candles, seeing we, for the most part, take our meals by daylight? or for what purpose can you desire to look out of the window, unless, indeed, it be to make grimaces at the company? or, how do we

* The candlesticks placed by P——yites on the communion-table. —*Scrib.*

know that, while you are whispering to yourself, you are not praying that the victuals may choke or disagree with us?" As for the alteration of the waistcoat, being perhaps a matter of the least moment, it was of course resisted with the hottest fire of indignation.

Considerably affected by these remonstrances, and yet unwilling to forego his adopted design, Martin found himself in great perplexity, and was quite at a loss to extricate himself from the dilemma. Happily, at this critical point, he bethought him of a certain Doctor of Laws, a profound casuist, to whom he forthwith referred the whole matter for consideration.

Now as this learned person's character in respect of perception and judgment stands pre-eminently high, I have no choice but to record in full the result of his deliberations in a matter thus grave and complex; and most happy am I at being enabled to lay before the public, for the especial benefit of those who now or hereafter may fill the enviable and pleasant office of referee, so admirable a model for all future decisions— and this I shall do as near as may be in his own words.

"*Imprimis*,"* observed the learned doctor, "in the question of the table, its title and appearance, together with the secret whisperings and things of minor note, we offer no opinion whatsoever; secondly, as regards that vastly important matter,

* Vide a late "Charge."

namely, your position in the saying of grace, it is not quite easy to determine which of the cardinal points has the greatest influence in rendering such blessings efficacious; the company and the window have both undoubted claims upon your notice; in order, therefore, to preserve true impartiality, I allow you the choice of two expedients; firstly, you may turn neither to the window nor to the company, but balance the matter by gazing directly across the room; or, secondly, as we are the more inclined to recommend, you may take for your guide the weather-cock on the chimney-top, so arranging as to be duly apprized by your butler, at the instant of 'dishing up,' as to the particular quarter to which it points. Thirdly, we do decide that the candelabra are by all means to be retained; but in order to guard against offence, we would have you invariably keep the extinguishers on. And last, in respect of your vests, we are of opinion that you should discard neither, but regard each with equal favour, donning the white one in the morning and honouring the black in the afternoon; unless, indeed, to avoid loss of time and the inconvenience of shifting (points worthy of deliberation), you choose to be provided with one combining both colours, black and white; a pious plaid, which might serve for all occasions. And here, you are to understand, that the above decisions are put forth merely by way of advice and monition, which you will follow or not, according to the dictates of your own judgment, we

only reserving unto ourselves the right of knocking you down, provided you fail to obey them; and so we bid you heartily farewell.

"*Postscript.** I trust you will not misunderstand the above, supposing it to contain my real sentiments, which I have ever maintained to be of a very opposite nature."

Acute and profound as this exposition must universally be pronounced, it did not produce the good effects which might reasonably have been expected; this, however, was probably owing in some measure to the conduct of Martin, who, acting rather upon the spirit in which it had been conceived, than according to the terms in which it was expressed, pursued himself a middle course, with respect to its adoption. In some places, he complied with one particular, in some with another—one day he would carry out the whole, the next he would abandon it altogether; insomuch that his well-wishers, chafed at being tampered with so long, or in despair at seeing no prospect of termination to the controversy, began to desert his house daily, and were driven either to swell the ranks of his brother Jack, or were compelled to shut themselves up at home, pining and praying for the day which should restore their good friend Martin to his senses.

* Vide a late "Pastoral Letter."

CONCLUSION.

It is a hard matter for a writer so to regulate his impetus that it may be just sufficient to carry him to the end of his subject and no further. Nine times out of ten it happens that it is exhausted before the subject is complete — occasionally, when over abundant, it is permitted to die gradually away in supplements and addenda; for myself, I feel in the predicament of a Newmarket jockey, who having passed the goal at speed, is fortunate if he be able to rein up within the next two hundred yards; as my pen, therefore, will be running on, I may as well make an effort to guide it to some purpose, and nothing better appears to suggest itself—(seeing how much good advice is relished, and how very commonly it is acted upon)—than to offer a little of a superior quality to the consideration of our hero.

We left him in a state of excitement and uncertainty — disturbed and wavering—scarcely able to distinguish friends from foes, and "*moving on towards something*," he knows not what; with his new advisers, the Novelists, straining every nerve to accelerate and influence his progress, all, of course, in strict accordance with their avowed principle—

"*that it is better to be fixed and quiet than to be restless and changing.*"* I would entreat him, then, in the first place, to pause for an instant and take breath—to pull off his hat, wipe his brow, and look soberly around ere he proceeds in the prosecution of his pleasant and profitable work, which seems greatly to resemble that of pulling down his own house. Doubtless the building he intends to erect on its site is far grander in design, far more convenient, far more imposing, than his present abode—but bricks and mortar are perilous playthings :—

"*Hæc* tu Romane caveto."

Meanwhile, let him estimate truly his own position, and that in which such conduct places his friends and dependants, who are forced, either against their consciences, to follow him through many impertinencies, or, against their love and duty, to withdraw themselves altogether from his society.

I am aware that of these innovations (for the revival of antiquated and forgotten customs merits the term, bringing with it, as it does, all the evils without the advantages of novelty) many are in themselves immaterial, being little else than matters of forms or matters of words; but if immaterial, we would ask, is not the disturbance, not to say the dismemberment, of the whole family circle rather a high price to pay for their adoption? Does not the amusement, however harmless, become a little too expensive? or

* British Critic, vol. xx.

has a university education made Martin such a master of odds that he can see the prudence of staking a treasure against a trifle—of risking his coat for the sake of an embroidered button-hole?

But other of his extravagancies are far from being immaterial — many are of weight, conversant with high principles, and partaking in their nature of that "*something*" towards which he is said to be moving. Let him examine that something closely, and mark how broad the line that divides it from perjury and apostasy. Let him get off his stilts, they are dangerous—and throw his second hat into the fire, it is ridiculous; above all, let him beware of his favourite sect—let him resist with all firmness their pet project of "*un-Martinizing*" him—let him be carried away neither by the power of their language nor by the purity of their lives. There has been a vast deal of cant propagated about the latter; but admitting the fact, and it seems to involve something very like the fallacy contained in the well-known distich—

> "For different creeds let angry bigots fight,
> *His can't be wrong whose life is in the right;*"

and which they are among the first to expose and condemn; admitting the fact, I would ask, how does it affect the question? Their warmest admirers surely would not pretend to set them up as *authority*. The question is one involving doctrines of such weighty import, that we are told the

authority of the best of men—ay, of the angels from heaven—would weigh but as a feather in the balance. There are many people, doubtless, quite ready to rush into the opposite extreme, and are very desirous of discovering these gentlemen to be impostors, hypocrites, emissaries of my Lord Peter, secret and deadly enemies. For my own part, I regard them as something far more dangerous—injudicious friends; but what need to engage with them as either? why not withdraw from the combat altogether, and leave the field to the Anithingarians, the Quitotheronians, &c., who are all ready girt and caparisoned for the fray, and who, as they must be fighting with somebody, are far better engaged in knocking their heads against the college walls of Oxford than in pelting dirt and stones at Martin and his friends.

Lastly, one word at parting with these Novelists or Tabbies themselves, the framers of this new system, which—resembling a body fitted at random with the mingled limbs of a giant and a dwarf—is in part magnificent, in part mean—upon the whole, impractical and ridiculous: I would venture to recal to their memory what never ought to have escaped it, namely, that of their own free-will; at their own solicitation, they took in hand certain lands and tenements under Martin, at a peppercorn rent, but saddled with certain strictly-defined conditions, of which they are bound alike by justice and honour to carry out the spirit; and now, being once comfortably entered into possession, they

bethink themselves of examining—what it would have been just as well if they looked into before—the nature and extent of these said conditions;—they begin to weigh the authority of those who framed them, and to discover all of a sudden that, in many respects, they go mightily against their consciences. What course do they pursue in this dilemma? Like discontented tenants, they abuse their landlord, rail at their leases, and attack the very establishment to which they are so much beholden, taking good care, however, by straining a little here, giving a little there, accepting this in one sense, and rejecting that in another, to keep just within the verge of the strict letter of the law.

One,* indeed, has lately so far omitted this customary prudence as to arouse slumbering Justice from her nap, and has accordingly been condemned by a bench of county magistrates to two years' enjoyment of the silent system.

But surely, with the principles these gentlemen avow, they must feel sadly encumbered by their present possessions, inasmuch as reverence, gratitude, a sense of decency, all of which they are allowed to possess in so eminent a degree, must serve to embarrass their designs and cripple their flights of genius. Straight-laced people have ever considered it ungracious, as well as impolitic, to

* Dr. P——y, suspended from preaching within the limits of the University of Oxford.—*Scrib.*

strike at a benefactor while your daily comforts are flowing from his hands; and ignorant people, unqualified to draw fine philosophical distinctions, are apt to look with suspicion upon a man whose words and deeds do manifestly disagree. Would it not, then, I ask, in conclusion, be more wise—would it not be more manly—would it not be more honest, before they proceed with their task of picking holes in Mr. Martin's coat, to render up to him his farms, and to seek for others better suited to their views at the hands of the orthodox Lord Peter, or of whomsoever they may find willing to trust them?

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